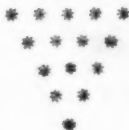


The Literary Miscellany.

Nº. IX.

CONTAINING

1. *The Story of Chanbert, the Misanthropist.*
 2. *Bertram and Matilda.*
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 6. *Veterona.*
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1795.

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THE
S T O R Y
OF
C H A U B E R T;
THE
M I S A N T H R O P I S T.



C H A U B E R T was born at Bourdeaux, and died there not many years ago in the Franciscan convent; I was in that city soon after this event, and my curiosity led me to collect several particulars relative to this extraordinary humorist. He inherited a good fortune from his parents, and in his youth was of a benevolent disposition, subject however to sudden caprices and extremes of love and hatred. Various causes are assigned for his misanthropy, but the principal disgust, which turned him furious against mankind, seems to have arisen from the treachery of a friend who ran away with his mistress, just when Chaubert was on the point of marrying her; the ingratitude of this man was certainly of a

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very black nature, and the provocation heinous, for Chaubert, whose passions were always in extremes, had given a thousand instances of romantic generosity to this unworthy friend, and reposed an entire confidence in him in the matter of his mistress: He had even saved him from drowning one day at the eminent risk of his life, by leaping out of his own boat into the Garonne and swimming to the assistance of his, when it was sinking in the middle of the stream; His passion for his mistress was no less vehement: so that his disappointment had every aggravation possible, and, operating upon a nature more than commonly susceptible, reversed every principle of humanity in the heart of Chaubert, and made him for the greatest part of his life, the declared enemy of human nature.

After many years passed in foreign parts he was accidentally brought to his better senses by discovering that through these events, which he had so deeply repented, he had providentially escaped from miseries of the most fatal nature: Thereupon he returned to his own country, and entering into the order of Franciscans, employed the remainder of his life in atoning for his past errors after the most exemplary manner. On all occasions of distress Father Chaubert's zeal presented itself to the relief and comfort of the unfortunate, and sometimes he would enforce his admonitions of resignation by the lively picture he would draw of his own extravagancies; in extraordinary cases he has been known to give his communicants a transcript or diary in his own hand-writing of certain passages of his life, in which he had minutely his thoughts at the time they occurred, and which he kept by him for such extraordinary purposes. This paper was put into my hands by a gentleman who had re-

ceived much benefit from this good father's conversation and instruction ; I had his leave for transcribing it, or publishing, if I thought fit ; this I shall now avail myself of, as I think it is a very curious journal.

" My son, whoever thou art, profit by the words of experience, and let the example of Chaubert, who was a beast without reason, and is become a man by repentance, teach thee wisdom in adversity and inspire thy heart with sentiments of resignation to the will of the Almighty !

" When the treachery of people, which I ought to have despised, had turned my heart to marble and my blood to gall, I was determined upon leaving France and seeking out some of those countries, from whose famished inhabitants nature withholds her bounty and where men groan in slavery and sorrow : As I passed through the villages towards the frontiers of Spain, and saw the peasants dancing in a ring to the pipe, or carousing at their vintages, indignation smote my heart, and I wished that heaven would dash their cups with poison, or blast the sunshine of their joys with hail and tempest.

" I traversed the delightful province of Biscay without rest to the soles of my feet or sleep to the temples of my head. Nature was before my eyes dressed in her gayest attire ;—*Thou mother of fools*, I exclaimed, *why dost thou trick thyself out so daintily for knaves and harlots to make a property of thee ? The children of thy womb are vipers in thy bosom, and will sting thee mortally, when thou hast given them their fil at thy improvident breasts.*—The birds chaunted in the groves, the fruit trees glittered on the mountain sides, the water-falls made music for the echoes, and man went

singing to his labour ;—Give me said I, the clank of fetters and the yell of galley-slaves under the lashes of the whip—And in the bitterness of my heart I cursed the earth, as I trode over its prolific surface.

“ I entered the ancient kingdom of Castile, and the prospect was a recreation to my sorrow-vexed soul: I saw the lands lie waste and fallow; the vines trailed on the ground and buried their fruitage in the furrows; the hand of man was idle, and nature slept as in the cradle of creation; the villages were thinly scattered, and ruin sate upon the unroofed sheds, where lazy pride laid stretched upon its straw in beggary and vermin. *Ah! this is something,* I cried out, *this scene is fit for man, and I'll enjoy it.*—I saw a yellow half-starved form, cloaked to the heels in rags, his broad-brimmed beaver on his head, through which his staring locks crept out in squalid shreds, that fell like snakes upon the shoulders of a fiend. —*Such ever be the fate of human nature! I'll aggravate his misery by the insult of charity.* Hark ye, *Castilian,* I exclaimed, *take this pisette; it is coin, it is silver from the mint of Mexico; a Spaniard dug it from the mine, a Frenchman gives it you; put by your pride and touch it!*—*Curst be your nation,* the Castilian replied, *I'll starve before I'll take it from your hands.*—*Starve then,* I answered, and passed on.

“ I climbed a barren mountain; the wolves howled in the desert, and the vultures screamed in flocks for prey; I looked, and beheld a gloomy mansion underneath my feet, vast as the pride of its founder, gloomy and disconsolate as his soul; it was the Escorial.—*Here then the tyrant reigns,* said I, *here let him reign; hard as these rocks his throne, waste as these deserts be his dominion!*—A meagre creature passed me; famine stared in his

eye, he cast a look about him, and sprung upon a kid, that was browsing in the desert, he smote it dead with his staff, and hastily thrust it into his wallet—*Ah! sacrilegious villain!*—cried a brawny fellow; and, leaping on him from behind a rock, seized the hungry wretch in the act; he dropped upon his knees and begged for mercy.—*Mercy!* cried he that seized him, *do you purloin the property of the church and ask for mercy? Take it!*—So saying, he beat him to the earth with a blow, as he was kneeling at his feet, and then dragged him to towards the convent of St. Lawrence: I could have hugged the miscreant for the deed.

“ I held my journey through the desert, and desolation followed me to the very streets of Madrid; the fathers of the inquisition came forth from the cells of torture, the cross was elevated before them, and a trembling wretch in a saffron coloured vest, painted with flames of fire, was dragged to execution in an open square; they kindled a fire about him, and sang praises to God, whilst the flames deliberately consumed their human victim: He was a Jew who suffered, they were Christians who tormented.—*See what the religion of God is,* said I to myself, *in the hands of man!*”

“ From the gates of Madrid I bent my course towards the port of Lisbon; as I traversed the wilderness of Estremadura, a robber took his aim at me from behind a cork-tree, and the ball grazed my hat upon my head.—*You have missed your aim,* I cried, *and have lost the merit of destroying a man.*—*Give me your purse,* said the robber.—*Take it,* I replied, *and buy with it a friend; may it serve you as it has served me!*”

“ I found the city of Lisbon in ruins; her foundations smoked upon the ground; the dy-

ing and the dead laid in heaps; terror fate in every visage, and mankind was visited with the plagues of the Almighty, famine, fire, and earthquake—*Have they not the inquisition in this country?* I asked; I was answered they had.—*And do they make all this outcry about an earthquake?* said I within myself, *let them give God thanks and be quiet.*

“Presently there came ships from England, loaded with all manner of goods for the relief of the inhabitants; the people took the bounty, were preserved, then turned and cursed their preservers for heretics.—*This is as it should be,* said I, *these men act up to their nature, and the English are a nation of fools, I will not go amongst them.*—After a short time behold a new city was rising on the ruins of the old one! The people took the builders’ tools, which the English had sent them, and made themselves houses. I overheard a fellow at his work say to his companion.—*Before the earthquake I made my bed in the streets, now I shall have a house to live in.*—*This is too much,* said I; *their misfortunes make this people happy, and I will stay no longer in their country.*—I descended to the banks of the Tagus; there was a ship, whose canvas was loosed for sailing.—*She is an English ship,* says a Galliego porter; *they are brave seamen, but damned tyrants on the quarter-deck.*—*They pay well for what they have,* says a boatman, *and I am going on board her with a cargo of lemons.*—I threw myself into the wherry, and entered the ship: The mariners were occupied with their work, and nobody questioned me why I was amongst them. The tide wafted us into the ocean and the night became tempestuous, the vessel laboured in the sea and the morning brought no respite to our toil.—*Whither are you bound?* said I to the master.—*To hell,* said he, *for*

nothing but the devil ever drove at such a rate!—The fellows voice was thunder; the sailors sung in the storm, and the master's oaths were louder than the waves; the third day was a dead calm, and he swore louder than ever. —If the winds were of this man's making, thought I, he would not be content with them.—A favourable breeze sprung up as if it had come at his calling.—I thought it was coming says he, put her before the wind, it blows fair for our port.—But where is your port? again I asked him.—Sir, says he, I can now answer your question as I should do; with God's leave I am bound to Bourdeaux; every thing at sea goes as it pleases God.—My heart sunk at the name of my native city. I was frightened, added he, from London with a cargo of goods of all sorts for the poor sufferers by the earthquake; I shall load back with wine for my owners, and so help out a charitable voyage with some little profit, if it please God to bless our endeavours.—Heyday! thought I, how fair weather changes this fellow's note!—Lewin, said he to a handsome youth, who stood at his elbow, we will now seek out this Monsieur Chaubert at Bourdeaux, and get payment of his bills on your account.—Shew me your bills, said I, for I am Chaubert.—He produced them, and I saw my own name forged to bills in favour of the villain who had so treacherously dealt with me in the affair of the woman who was to have been my wife.—Where is the wretch, said I, who drew these forgeries;—The youth burst into tears.—He is my Father, he replied, and turned away.—Sir, says the master, I am not surprized to find this fellow a villain to you, for I was once a trader in affluence and have been ruined by his means and reduced to what you see me; I can earn a maintenance, and am as happy in my present hard employ, nay happier than when I was rich and idle; but to defraud his own son proves him an unnatural rascal,

and if I had him here, I would hang him at the mizen yard.

—"When the English master declared he was happier in his present hard service than in his former prosperity, and that he forgave the villain who had ruined him, I started with astonishment, and stood out of his reach, expecting every moment when his phrensy would break out; I looked him steadily in the face, and to my surprise saw no symptoms of madness; there was no wandering in his eyes, and content of mind was impressed upon his features.—*Are you in your senses,* I demanded, *and can you forgive the villain?*—From my heart, answered he, *else how should I expect to be forgiven?*—His words struck me dumb; my heart tugged at my bosom; the blood rushed to my face. He saw my situation and turned aside to give some orders to the sailors; after some minutes he resumed the conversation, and advancing towards me, in his rough familiar manner, said—*It is my way, Mr. Chaubert, to forgive and forget, though to be sure the fellow deserves hanging for his treatment of his poor boy his son, who is as good a lad as ever lived, but as for father and mother—Who is his mother? What was her name?* I eagerly demanded. Her name had no sooner passed his lips than I felt a shock through all my frame beyond that of electricity; I staggered as if with a sudden stroke, and caught hold of the barricade; an involuntary shriek burst from me, and I cried out—*That woman—Oh! that woman—Was a devil,* said the master, *and if you know but half the misery you have escaped, you would fall down upon your knees and thank God for the blessing: I have heard your story, Mr. Chaubert, and when a man is in love, do you see, he does not like to have his mistress taken from him; but some things are better lost than found, and if this is all you have to complain of, take my word you complain of*

the luckiest hour in your whole life. He would have proceeded, but I turned from him without uttering a word, and shutting myself up into my cabin surrendered myself to my meditations.

My mind was now in such a tumult, that I cannot recal my thoughts, much less put them in any order for relation : The ship however kept her course, and had now entered the mouth of the Garonne ; I landed on the quay of Bourdeaux ; the master accompanied me, and young Lewis kept charge of the ship : The first object that met my view was a gibbet erected before the door of a merchant's compting-house : The convict was kneeling on a scaffold : whilst a friar was receiving his last confession ; his face was turned towards us ; the Englishman glanced his eye upon him, and instantly cried out—*Look, look, Mr. Chaubert the very man, as I am alive ; it is the father of young Lewis.*—The wretch had discovered us in the same moment, and called aloud—*Oh Chaubert, Chaubert ! let me speak to you before I die!*—His yell was horror to my soul ; I lost the power of motion, and the crowd pushing towards the scaffold, thrust me forward to the very edge of it ; the friar ordered silence, and demanded of the wretch why he had called out so eagerly, and what he had farther to confess. *Father, replied the convict, this is the very man, the very Chaubert of whom I was speaking : he was the best of friends to me, and I repaid his kindness with the blackest treachery ; I seduced the woman of his affections from him, I married her, and because we dreaded his resentment, we conspired in an attempt upon his life by poison.*—He now turned to me and proceeded as follows—

You may remember, Chaubert, as we were supping together on the very evening of Louisa's elopement, she handed to you a glass of wine to drink to your approaching nuptials ; as you were lifting it to your lips your fervent

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its spaniel leaped upon your arm and dashed it on the floor; in a sudden transport of passion, which you were ever addicted to, you struck the creature with violence and laid it dead at your feet. It was the saving moment of your life—the wine was poisoned, inevitable death was in the draught, and the animal you killed was God's instrument for preserving you; reflect upon the event, subdue your passions, and practise resignation; Father, I have no more to confess; I die repentant; Let the executioner do his office."



BERTRAM AND MATILDA.



THE morning drinks my husband's blood ;
" Go, Page, (Matilda cries)
" Haste to the holy Anselm's cell,
" And bid the hermit rise."

He came ;—but when, with hands uprais'd,
And kneeling on the ground,
Bent o'er her sleeping babe, in tears
The sorrowing fair he found ;

With kindred sorrow torn long time,
The reverend hermit stands ;—
" Say, Lady, whence thy grief—and why,
" To Heaven, these lifted hands ?"

" The morning drinks my husband's blood,
" By doom unjust he dies ;
" Bound in the dungeon's dreary cell,
" The prison'd Bertram lies.

“ O ! Father ! by our Saviour’s cross,
 “ Which guards thy holy breast !
 “ By him whose bosom bled for all
 “ Receive my sad request !

“ Grant in thy sacred garb’d disguis’d
 “ To seek the dungeon’s cell ;
 “ Receive a husband’s kiss of death,
 “ And sigh a last farewell.”

“ Yes ! Lady, take my hermit’s dress,
 “ My prayers and blessings take ;
 “ The Power, whose bosom bled for all,
 “ Will ne’er thy truth forsake.”

Veil’d in the reverend father’s hood,
 She sought the prison round ;
 “ ’Tis Bertram’s flinty bed—and fast
 “ His eyes in sleep are bound.

“ Is this the bed of guilt ?—Such rest
 “ Ne’er sooth’d a traitor’s sense ;
 “ Such is the rest of virtue—such
 “ The sleep of innocence !”

Awaken’d by the glimmering lamp,
 He saw the father stand ;
 And thrice he kiss’d the extended cross,
 And press’d the trembling hand.

“ O ! Father, mourn not o’er the scene
 “ Which soon in death will close ;
 “ Mourn where each lengthen’d hour of life,
 “ Prolongs a widow’s woes.

“ Watch o’er an orphan child ;—and sooth
 “ A mother’s woes to rest :”

———Matilda clasps her Bertram's neck,
She sinks upon his breast.

"Thy hour of death is mine ;—I come
"Resolv'd to share thy doom ;
"The morning's light which sees thee fall,
"Shall guide me to the tomb."

"Oh ! by our tender pledge of love
"Avert the dire design !"—
"Our joys were one ;—one be our fate ;
"Thy hour of death be mine."

At day-break from his bed, enrag'd
The watchful Richard lies ;—
"Lead out the victim to his fate,
"E'en now the traitor dies."

Encircled by the murmuring crowd
The monarch press'd the throne ;
No eye, save his, refus'd a tear,
No breast, save his, a groan.

When slow the sad procession mov'd,
The minister of fate
Came first ;—his right-hand bore aloft,
The axe's ponderous weight.

The hermit next—wrapt in the hood,
With faltering footsteps went ;
His arms were cross'd low towards the earth,
His looks were downward bent.

Bare-headed last—with mein erect,
The dauntless Bertram came ;
Unmov'd he gaz'd on all ;—no fear
Could shake the warrior's frame.

"Now strike the blow."—Firm on the block
His guiltless neck he laid;
The naked axe, uplifted high,
Hung trembling o'er his head.

"Hence, vain disguise,"—Matilda cried;
"One little moment stay;"—
With eager haste, she instant cast
The friar's garb away.

Down her white breasts that wildly heav'd,
Her hair luxuriant hung;
"Now strike the blow;"—O'er Bertram's neck
Her snowy arms she flung.

"One death shall end us both."—"No, live,"
The wondering Richard cries;
"To life—to liberty—to fame,
"Thy monarch bids thee rise."—

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THE

INDIAN STUDENT;

OR,

THE FORCE OF NATURE.

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FROM SUSQUEHANNA'S utmost springs,
Where savage tribes pursue their game,
(His blanket ty'd with yellow strings)
A shepherd of the Forest came.

From long debate the council rose ;
And, viewing SHALUM'S tricks with joy,
To Harvard-hall, o'er wastes of snows,
They sent the tawney-colour'd boy.

Awhile he wrote ; awhile he read ;
Awhile he learn'd their grammar-rules :

AN INDIAN SAVAGE so well bred,
Great credit promis'd to the schools.

Some thought he would in law excel ;
Some said in Physic he would shine ;
And one, who knew him passing well,
Beheld in him a sound divine.

But those of more discerning eye
Ev'n then could other prospects shew ;
And saw him lay his Virgil by,
To wander with his dearer bow.

The tedious hour of study spent,
The heavy moulded lecture done,
He to the woods a hunting went ;
But sigh'd to see the setting sun.

The shady bank, the purling stream,
The woody wild his heart possess'd ;
The dewy lawn his morning dream,
In fancy's finest colours drest.

"And why," he cry'd, "did I forsake
"My native woods for gloomy walls ?
"The silver stream, the limpid lake,
"For musty books and college halls ?

"A little could my wants supply :—
"Can wealth and honour give me more ?
"Or will the sylvan god deny
"The humble treat he gave before ?

"Where nature's ancient forests grow,
"And mingled laurel never fades,
"My heart is fix'd ; and I must go
"To die among my native shades."

THE INDIAN STUDENT.

21

He spoke—and to the western springs
 (His gown discharg'd—his money spent—
His blanket ty'd with yellow strings)
The Shepherd of the forest went.

Returning to the rural reign,
The Indians welcom'd him with joy ;
The council took him home again,
And blest the tawny-colour'd boy.

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R O S

—“**W**HAT afflicts you,”
said I.—Alas ! Sir, have you
The person who thus answered
blind man, seated on the trunk
at the foot of which issued a fire
bald forehead, robbed of its hono
hand of time—his patched wallet,
of the bounties of Ceres ;—the hicko
which he rested his debilitated arm ;—his
that seemed fainting under the pressure of ex
treme hunger ;—his sightless eyes, and tremu
lous voice ;—altogether struck me with a kind
of reverential horror.—I looked once more up
on the object which had so riveted my amaze
ment, and thought that Providence had deserted
one of her weakest children :—The limpid

bleared at his feet, murmured
with the language of distress,
amulated sorrow.

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denly lost, by the person becoming a bankrupt in

whose hands I had entrusted my little capital;

the pressure of a misfortune so serious and unex-

pected, was infinitely too powerful to be re-

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R O S A.

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—“**W**HAT afflicts you, my good man,” said I.—Alas ! Sir, have you seen my child ?—The person who thus answered me, was a poor blind man, seated on the trunk of a hollow tree, at the foot of which issued a silver spring ; his bald forehead, robbed of its honours by the iron hand of time—his patched wallet, unconscious of the bounties of Ceres ;—the hickory staff on which he rested his debilitated arm ;—his body, that seemed fainting under the pressure of extreme hunger ;—his sightless eyes, and tremulous voice ;—altogether struck me with a kind of reverential horror.—I looked once more upon the object which had so riveted my amazement, and thought that Providence had deserted one of her weakest children :—The limpid

stream, that bubbled at his feet, murmured hoarsely in unison with the language of distress, as if sensible of his accumulated sorrow.

I got off my horse—"I pray you inform me, my poor old man, have you no one to conduct you to a roof, where plenty might gather joy, by wiping the tear of misery from your furrowed cheek?"—"No one," answered he, feebly raising his snow-white head.—He pronounced these last words in a tone which made me think for a moment, that humanity had abandoned the world.—"What! not one, my old friend?"—"Alas! Sir, my wife and children have all deserted me;—I am poor, old, and blind, yet I must forgive them; but my daughter, O my daughter!" repeated he, with a deep sigh that seemed to escape from the ^{inner} recesses of his heart.—"Are you speaking of a favorite child, my old man?"—"Ah! good Sir, she is more than a child, she is my friend!"—"It was she, whom of all my children, I neglected when the rays of prosperity gladdened my younger days; and now, when I am fallen into the vale of years, and laden with horror, she is the only one who will administer comfort to my miseries!"—"When did she leave you?"—"Yesterday, Sir, for the first time."—"You have not surely been unhappy from your youth! you could not have arrived at so advanced an age, if the visitations of sorrow had been continual."—"The poor man sighed, and gave me his history in a few words.—"I had laboured forty years to amass a few hundred dollars by the sweat of my brow, which I suddenly lost, by the person becoming a bankrupt in whose hands I had entrusted my little capital; the pressure of a misfortune so serious and unexpected, was infinitely too powerful to be re-

sisted by so weak a philosopher as me;—even the force of Christianity failed to alleviate the sting of w^{oe}. For these ten years past my being has been comfortless (said the poor old man, pointing to the place where his eyes once were); for these ten years past I have been praying for my dissolution: many miserable wretches, who were doomed to wander through the darksome caverns of affliction, have hope at least to strengthen them upon their journey; but my expectations of mortal bliss are over.”—“You must not lose sight of hope, my good old man; it is possible you may yet be happy.”—“Happy!—ah! dear Sir, circumstanced as I am, even to expect such an event were presumption.”—“You are not certain, my poor friend, but assistance may be near you in the moment of complaining.”—“Assistance! I entreat, Sir, mock not my misfortunes; can the power of kings give me a ray of light?”—This answer struck me so forcibly, that I immediately turned towards the sun, and could not help uttering a silent prayer of gratitude to the Deity, that I was in possession of so invaluable a gift. He remained silent for a moment, resting his hands upon his staff, and bending his pallied head towards the earth, which seemed, in the melancholy state of my understanding at that period, to call him to her bosom; then issuing a woe-fraught sigh, continued—“Oh! my daughter! my dear child! but for her goodness I should long since have ceased to exist; when I determined to suppress my being, and die by the slow ministry of hunger—the poor child cries—embraces my nerveless knees—calls me her father—her dear her honored father, in a tone of supplication so persuasive, and so tender, that the influence of desperation yields to the entreaties of

an angel ;—and yet—she does not return !——
Ah ! Rosa, wilt thou leave me here to perish
without the consolation of a last embrace—
without the rapture of bestowing my final blessing
on my child ?—O, my God ! dost thou then
abandon me !”——

The awful manner in which he uttered these
words chilled the very pulses of my heart.——
I lifted my streaming eyes to heaven, and murmured
involuntarily—God of nature ! is it possible
thou can’st have abandoned him !——The
poor man thanked me, and I retired laden with
anguish.——I had wandered some distance from
the miserable man, when I perceived his daughter ;
—I ran to announce the discovery to her
father ;—I would not have exchanged the commission
to have been sovereign of the world.——His
greedy ear drank the intelligence with rapture,
and the good old man was cheered once more
with a moment of joy. His daughter arrived
out of breath—she had been far away, begging
charity for her unhappy father ; I looked at the
amiable Rosa with unutterable delight ;——
I thought her countenance was more than human ;
——she uttered the sentiments of filial piety in
so graceful a manner, that pity, admiration,
and respect, at once usurped the government
of my bosom.

I felt a delicious emotion in perceiving, with
what undescribable tenderness the poor old man
and his daughter embraced each other.——Oh !
Rousséau !—Oh ! Yorick ! if such a scene was
to pass near your tombs, would you not burst
from the cold monument of death, to celebrate
the virtues of the exemplary Rosa !——

“ Is it thee my dearest Rosa ;—is it thee ?”
said the aged father, stretching out his withered
hands, which seemed to seek the fond object

of his regards with sympathetic agency ;—
“ where art thou Rosa ? let me press thee to
my panting heart ;—you tarried so long, that I
almost began to think you had forsaken me.”—
Rosa instantly kissed the trembling forehead of
her parent, and wetted his silver locks with the
tears of affection.

“ I knew, my dear child—I well knew, that
thou wouldst return ;—come near me, that I
may kiss thee once more.”——“ You will never
desert this old man again ; but constantly watch
by his side, to soften the pangs of affliction.”—
“ Ah ! Sir,” replied the lovely girl, “ do you
not know.”——“ What, Rosa ?”——“ that he is
my father !”——What a sentiment !—could vo-
lumes express more !——Ye parents, who boast
of educating your children agreeable to the prin-
ciples of Christianity, bid them read this tale.

Edwin.

ELLEN,

AN ELEGY.



COLD blew the wind ;—no gleam of light
When Ellen left her home ;
And brav'd the horrors of the night,
O'er dreary wilds to roam.

The lovely maid had late been gay,
When hope and pleasure smil'd,
But now, alas ! to grief a prey
Was Ellen Sorrow's child !

She long was William's promis'd bride ;
But, ah ! how sad a doom !
The gentle youth, in beauty's pride,
Was summon'd to the tomb !

No more those joys shall Ellen prove
Which many an hour beguil'd ;

No. IX.

C

From morn to eve she mourn'd her love—
Sweet Ellen!—Sorrow's child!

With salt'ring step away she hies
O'er Wililam's grave to weep;
For Ellen there, with tears and sighs
Her watch would often keep.

The pitying angel saw her woe,
And came with aspect mild,
"Thy tears shall now no longer flow,
"Sweet Ellen!—Sorrow's child!

"Thy plaintive notes were heard above,
"Where thou shalt soon find rest;
"Again thou shalt behold thy love,
"And be for ever blest."

"And can such bliss be mine!" she cried,
With voice and looks so wild;—
Then sunk upon the earth and died
Sweet Ellen!—Sorrow's child

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V E T E R O N A.

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*Oh ! happy Poverty ! thou chiefest good
Bestow'd by Heaven, but seldom understood.*

AS the admired Lavinia was one day walking in the fields of P——, melancholy with the remembrance of past misfortunes, and disturbed with the prospect of future distress, after having wandered over flowery valleys, regardless of their beauties, and through tuneful woods, undelighted with their melody, she was observed, by the companion of her retirement, to fix her eyes, with unusual earnestness, upon a little cottage built with turf, and covered with straw, which the interposition of a tall hedge had hindered them from seeing, 'till they were almost at the door. Here Lavinia stood gazing, as at a sight unexpected and surprizing ; at length a sigh broke from her bosom, and soon after a placid smile beamed on her countenance, such as proceeds from a sense of ease, rather than of transport ; such as accompanies, not the emotions of triumphant gaiety, but the calm of unruffled quiet : This interval of cheerfulness

soon gave way to another sigh, and that sigh was succeeded by a second smile: She then relapsed into a settled pensiveness, and taking her eyes off the cottage, turned homewards without speaking.

Her companion, whom the awe of superior accomplishments, as well as the fear of appearing disrespectful to the unfortunate, had hitherto kept silent, could no longer support the pain of unsatisfied curiosity: "I hope madam," said she, with an air timorous, and irresolute, "you will favour my enquiry with a softer name than impertinence, if I confess my impatience to know the cause of that unusual perturbation, which your looks discovered at the sight of yonder cottage,"—Here she stopped, but observing Lavinia, though still silent yet not displeased—"If the sight of that solitary cot," said she, "awakened your remembrance to any poetical description of peaceful poverty, which by its pleasing ideas alternately excited, and soothed your melancholy; permit, Madam, an inferior understanding to remind you, that nothing ought to affect us but what is real:—nothing can be more unworthy to an experienced mind, than to envy the possession, solicit the enjoyment, or languish for the want of imaginary happiness. The amusing images of felicity are no more than the blissful dreams of a luxuriant fancy. I have, after a perusal of Cowley, made a short rural excursion to visit those retreats of quiet, and trace the footsteps of *Astrea*; but how was I disappointed, when instead of serenity and content, I beheld nothing but gloomy, and repining poverty, which claimed more my charity than envy. Every place appeared the haunt, either of misery or wretchedness. The little distinctions of dress and language, made me

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treated, either with a savage rudeness that deforms, or a creeping servility that debases human nature. Soon weary of this dismal prospect, I returned affrighted and disgusted, and felt a thousand vicissitudes of horror and compassion. I give my dear Lavinia this account of my rambles, with a view of preserving her from one error, who has rescued me from so many, by recalling her attention from airy visions, which while they please us, it is impossible not to wish, and difficult not to believe real. But if my conjecture be ill-grounded, and there be any more particular cause of your concern"—The young lady was going on, when she was interrupted by the sudden approach of some ladies of the same family, who like them, had been invited to walk by the coolness of the day. Their conversation immediately grew too polite to be rational, and turned wholly upon trifling objects, till the bell called them to dinner.

After dinner, Lavinia, whose good sense did not suffer her to be much diverted with talk which had no meaning, or laughter without a jest, as soon as civility gave her leave, retired with her companion, who shewed that she had not forgot the request she had made in the morning, by taking occasion, when they were private, of mentioning their walk, and the cottage they had met with; this was far from offending Lavinia, who being herself desirous of recollecting; and dwelling upon the pleasing scene, readily promised to gratify her favourite. At last, that they might not be disturbed by another visit from the triflers in the house, they withdrew into a wood, solitary, dark, and solemn, such as those in which the priests of old com-

ed the inspiration of their fancied deities, and in which the philosopher still attends the dictates of unclouded reason, and the poet pursues the thoughts of disencumbered fancy.

When they had seated themselves on a rising turf, at the foot of a tree—"Know, my dear Floretta, began Lavinia, "that in these woods, fields, and meadows, I passed those years of early life, which every one remembers with pleasure, either for their happiness, or innocence; here I played serene and gladsome, without any other thought but of the present, and in my little roving paid frequent visits to the neighbouring cottagers. The regard they shewed to my superior circumstances gave me, young as I was, such a degree of pleasure, as made me fond of conversing with them, and the little kindnesses which I could do them, by my recommendation at home, made them desirous of entertaining me. Among these I contracted the greatest familiarity with Veterona, who lived at that little habitation which we stopped at in our morning walk. She made, even then, so strong an impression upon me, that I remember distinctly all the particulars, of her life, which either my observation, or enquiry informed me of. "She was a native of this village, and lived all her life, here without any loose desire of seeking her fortune, or chimerical expectation of meeting with advancement in distant places. Being always averse to service, she had no borrowed vices, nor imitated follies: She was unacquainted with the false pleasures of luxury and expence, and what she knew nothing of, neither desired nor enjoyed. Her wants were the wants of nature. She had not habituated herself to falsehood, by flattering the vanity of a gaudy mistress, nor learned the art

of shedding tears for trifles, or bearing insolence with an affected submission. But having thus escaped the general source of corruption, and at the same time excluded herself from all hopes of any assistance but that of Providence, she maintained herself by an honest and unwearied industry, free from distress, and above dependence.

"It is the right of every cottager to graze a cow on the adjoining common: This privilege was Veterona's estate. She had, before I knew her, purchased a cow, I suppose with what she had saved out of the wages of her daily labour. From her she was supplied with milk, butter, and cheese, part of which she lived on, and part she carried to the market.

"In a little garden close to the house, she had a row of bee-hives; by which, when no other business called her away, she sat knitting with an heart easy, and face cheerful. How often have I, with delight, contemplated the pleasing scene, while seated on her little straw boss, under the shade of a luxuriant sycamore, with a kercher as white as a snow-drop and apron blue as an hare-bell, her peaceful life glided along in sweet serenity; the hum of the active insects, while they culled the treasures of her thyme, and lavender, entertained her ear, and the example of their labour excited her industry. Thus, what would have been wretchedness and poverty, in the estimation of those who have been accustomed to fashionable life, was ease and affluence, in the natural condition of humanity. The neatness and regularity of her house, unlike those which you were describing, and unusual in her station, made me then frequent it, and now makes me remember it with great satisfaction; her furniture, and uten-

files of the cheapest sort, were always clean and always in order; every thing about her seemed to be under the direction of prudence, and the smiles of Heaven.

“When she rose in the morning her devotions were her first employment; her earliest and purest thoughts were offered to her Creator, in a form of humble adoration. She then read a short portion of the holy scriptures with a sincere and earnest attention, not with a view of reconciling them or interpreting them in her own favour, but of regulating her behaviour by their unerring rules; nor till those duties were performed did she suffer her mind to fix upon the business of the day. She then milked her cow, and made her cheese; after which she sat down by her bees, and, except the little time spent at her meals, worked till evening. She never went far from home, her longest journey, like that of the Old Man in your darling Cowley, was to the next market, where she sold the produce of her little dairy, received the price of her knitting, and bought what her own cow and garden did not afford her. At the close of the evening she again milked her cow, and concluded the day with reading and devotions. Devotions! so far as we may presume to judge, not unheard, since offered by one who lived in the practise of all the duties that fell within her compass of action: Devotions! which drew upon Veterona the eyes of those angelic beings, who look with contempt on pompous greatness, and turn away with abhorrence from prosperous wickedness, and opened to her those regions of eternal happiness, whither many, who now boast their ample fortunes and extensive capacities, shall never arrive.

“ Thus was her life one uniform scene of innocence and piety ; not saddened by misfortune, nor varied by caprice : She enjoyed a health scarce interrupted till the age of seventy, and then dying of a short illness, was found possessed of sixty pounds which she had laid up, that when she should be able to work no longer, she might not subsist upon the labour of others.

“ Such was the inhabitant of that little cottage, a place more venerable than the splendid residences of sloth and luxury ! when we sit in this solitude, out of the sight of men, and unbiassed by their customs, when we are not afraid of being ridiculed by Wit, or wondered at by Folly ; is it possible to doubt a moment which to prefer ? Can rational beings put weeks, months, and years trifled away in unimproving talk, idle visits, and empty amusements, in competition with Veterona’s useful labour ? But if we look further into the conduct of those who stand in higher life, and add their vices to their follies, if with the time lost in thoughtless diversions we reckon that which is wasted by unlawful passions, in ambitious pursuits, or criminal amours ; if we reflect on the allurements to wickedness, and discouragements to virtue, we shall be still more convinced of the happiness of obscurity. ’Tis certain, that with whatever contempt we may now look on so narrow a circle of life, most of us will, at a time when we shall think most justly, wish to have been confined to it.”

“ You will now no longer wonder, my Florette, that as I was walking, oppressed with the weight of my own misfortunes, I could not forbear some emotion, when the sight of her cottage placed before my eyes, the happy life and

peaceful death of the contented, the industrious,
the innocent Vetrone."

*"How great the blessing and how vast the art
"To live on little with a thankful heart,"*

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